

ACCIDENT FROM BLASTING ROCKS.

At a ledge in Wilmington, near the intersection of the Boston and Lowell Railroad with the stage road, some men are employed in blasting. On the 15th inst. one of the laborers, Patrick Hogan, a respectable Irishman, in drilling out a charge, which from an accident could not be fired by the usual method, drilled into the powder, when, probably by the drill's striking fire, the powder exploded, and broke a large drill which he had in his hand, but it did not rend the rock much, or hurt any person but Mr. Hogan, who had his face and right side ~~was~~ badly lacerated—one or two stones pierced through his side into his chest; he will probably recover.

The frequency of accidents in the use of powder will probably always be in proportion to the imprudence of those who use it. For it is not probable that any method of rending rocks by powder will ever be invented, which will be perfectly safe but with the most judicious and careful. But there is one practice so fruitful of mischief, that it may not be useless to advert to it. I allude to the drilling out charges, which from some casualty could not be fired by the intended method. Accidents from this practice are so numerous and so generally known, that I hardly think it would be useful to array them to warn those who have escaped. They will not regard the warning,—they will not be convinced. Considering how little advantage has ever been derived from it, how much mischief it has done, how many lives have been lost by it; it has been suggested that it might be expedient for legislatures to enact laws to prevent those who know no better, from committing such unwarrantable acts, needlessly endangering their own lives and the lives of others. But in hopes that some may be saved by the experience of others, I will give the circumstances of the above mentioned accident.—Some of the drillers employed here, supposed there was no danger in drilling out a charge of powder, but the overseer knowing their views, took great care to prevent its ever being attempted; and declared, if he should find any one attempting to do it, he would immediately discharge him from the work. But it seems that the unhappy sufferer intending to save his employers the trifling expense of drilling another hole, and it seems, too much given to the common but fatal error—"I know best," commenced the operation which ended in the horrid disaster.

U. A. B.

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